-0057

THE

SETTER.



DASH.

Blue Belton 10 years old

out of "CORA" by "STING"

THE

SETTER:

WITH

NOTICES OF THE MOST EMINENT BREEDS NOW EXTANT;
INSTRUCTIONS HOW TO BREED, REAR, AND BREAK;
DOG SHOWS, FIELD TRIALS, GENERAL
MANAGEMENT, ETC.

BY

EDWARD LAVERACK,

Broughall Cottage, Whitchurch, Shropshire.

WITH TWO COLOURED ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PHOTOGRAPHS BY J. EASTHAM, OF MANCHESTER.

LONDON:
LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
1872.

All rights reserved.

LONDON: PRINTED BY
SPOTTISWOODE AND CO., NEW-STREET SQUARE
AND PARLIAMENT STREET

TO

R. LL. PURCELL LLEWELLIN, Esq.

Of Tregwynt, Letterstone, Pembrokeshire, South Wales,

WHO HAS ENDEAVOURED, AND IS STILL ENDEAVOURING,

BY SPARING NEITHER EXPENSE NOR TROUBLE,

TO BRING TO PERFECTION THE 'SETTER,'

THIS LITTLE VOLUME IS DEDICATED

BY HIS SINCERE FRIEND AND ADMIRER,

EDWARD LAVERACK.

INTRODUCTION.

IN presenting this little volume to the public they must not imagine I have written it through motives of vanity, to see my name in print, or to eulogise my own breed of dogs. Nothing of the sort. I write it at the earnest and repeated solicitations of many of my friends and acquaintances.

I have ever been 'going to do it' for the last twenty years, but ever too lazy and unwilling to commence. An old man now, over seventy-three years of age, in the 'sear and yellow leaf,' a sportsman from my early youth, and with more than half a century's *actual* experience in breeding setters, perhaps my ideas on the subject may be received favourably, and even valued and appreciated by some. I intend this little volume to be practical and instructive, but at the same time as concise as the subject will admit of.

I am not likely 'to achieve greatness,' or to have 'greatness thrust upon me,' as an author. I do not desire such a distinction; scribbling is not my *forte*, for I am not, and never have been, much given to the *cacoëthes scribendi*. In this case, though I admit the task is a wearisome one to me, on account of my advanced age, I must do my best to make myself clear and intelligible.

Dogs, but more particularly setters, have always been my study and hobby; my whole time and attention has been given in endeavouring to breed what I consider the best adapted for *nose*, *speed*, *shape*, *beauty*, *colour*, and lastly and of the very greatest importance, *endurance*; also for general utility, and serviceable for all kinds of game and localities. I think, without vanity (which would be pardonable), that I may say I have succeeded.

By this I do not wish my readers to imagine that I think myself, or desire to be considered (as some do), *the* authority, and that I know better than others: far from it. There are many living who have quite as much knowledge of the setter as I have. I merely wish them to understand that I have devoted long and anxious years to the study of setters, and in bringing my own

to what they are, *second* to none for general field purposes.

At exhibitions I am sure I have never been favoured. I am satisfied the decisions have been fairly and impartially given, and according to conscience.

Whenever judgment has been against me I have not rushed into print as a 'disappointed exhibitor,' but accepted the verdict in silence, and whatever I may have *thought*, was wise enough to keep my pen quiet, always bearing in mind Byron's well-known lines in 'English Bards and Scotch Reviewers:'

> 'Oh, Nature's noblest gift, my grey goose quill,
> Slave of my thoughts, obedient to my will,
> Torn from thy parent bird to form a pen,
> That mighty instrument of little men.'

Many years before the 'Field' was in existence, or dog shows or field trials thought of, my breed of setters had made their mark, and were well known and appreciated by hundreds of sportsmen in England, Ireland, and the Highlands of Scotland, where I have shot ever since I was eighteen years of age.

I am only going to handle the Setter. The man is not

yet born who understands *forty-one* classes, and not likely to come into existence for some time.

It is somewhat strange that the author of 'The Dog,' in writing about the 'Manchester gentleman's' setters, never noticed Mr. R. Ll. Purcell Llewellin's 'Countess,' or Mr. Garth's 'Daisy;' these are the only two *pure* specimens of the Laverack setters that ever contested at field trials, and I think I may say their performances have satisfied everyone.

One man may prefer one breed, one another; some the Irish, some the Gordons, and so on. It is purely a matter of taste, as there are doubtless *many strains quite as good as my own* to choose from.

There are gentlemen, first-rate sportsmen, who are never heard of. They do not care for shows or trials, yet they breed beautiful animals, shoot over them, and keep them to themselves; and I am not at all sure they are not right.

I purpose giving a short but faithful description of the different varieties I know of.

A man to understand a setter, or indeed any species of

dog, must have given many years' study to them. 'Rome was not built in a day,' neither is the knowledge of any animal, no matter what, picked up at once.

I should at shows like to see judges for each class; that is, no one should judge more than *one* class, and men *fully* competent for the office. Many judge classes they had better leave alone. As for instance, a man may be a first-rate judge of terriers, &c., but a very incompetent one of pointers or setters. They should remember the old adage of *Ne sutor ultra crepidam.*

All that I am about to bring before the reader may be relied on; it is not from *hearsay* or *theory*, but from long and extensive EXPERIENCE.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	ORIGIN, OR SUPPOSED ORIGIN, OF THE SETTER, GENERAL FORMATION, ETC.	1
II.	THE NAWORTH CASTLE, FEATHERSTONE CASTLE, LORD LOVAT'S, EARL OF SOUTHESK'S, EARL OF SEAFIELD'S, LORD OSSULSTON'S, MR. LORT'S, LLANIDLOES (WELSH), AND RUSSIAN BREED OF SETTERS.	7
III.	THE BLACK TAN OR GORDON SETTER	15
IV.	THE LAVERACK BREED OF ENGLISH SETTERS . . .	19
V.	THE IRISH SETTER	24
VI.	ON BREEDING, AND THE VALUE OF PEDIGREE . .	29
VII.	ON BREAKING	38
VIII.	DOG SHOWS	46
IX.	FIELD TRIALS	49
X.	GENERAL MANAGEMENT	52
XI.	ON SCENT	56
XII.	RELATIVE MERITS OF DOGS	58

THE SETTER.

CHAPTER I.

ENGLISH SETTERS.

OF all sporting dogs perhaps there are none more generally useful, beautiful, and sagacious than the Setter.

I am not alone in my opinion, for Daniel, in his 'Rural Sports,' says, 'Their noses are undoubtedly superior, their *feet* more durable . . ,' and 'are to be preferred to the pointer.'

Now I do not for one instant intend to detract from the merits of the noble-looking pointer, or any other breed the shooter may fancy; but being strictly a setter man, I am sure my readers will pardon me if I prefer my favourite class to any other.

That the setter is the most *generally* useful of shooting-dogs I fancy few will deny, being possessed of more lasting powers of endurance, therefore better adapted for *all* localities and weathers.

The setter can stand cold or heat alike; the hair on his feet and between his toes allows him to hunt rough cover as well as the spaniel. In fact, the *setter* is but an *improved spaniel.*

There is no doubt that *good-bred* setters are quite as keen of nose as pointers; and are, if you choose, excellent water-dogs and retrievers, which is seldom the case with pointers.

I am of opinion that all setters have more or less originally sprung from our various strains of spaniels, and I believe most breeders of any note agree that the setter is nothing more than the *setting spaniel* improved.

How the setter attained his sufficiency of point is difficult to account for, and which I leave to wiser heads than mine to determine.

The setter is said, and acknowledged by authorities of long standing, to be of greater antiquity than the pointer; if this is the case, and which I believe it to be, the setter cannot at *first* have been crossed with the pointer to render him what he is.

I have long had the idea that dogs carefully bred together, carefully educated, and carefully shot over, that their instinct and sagaciousness has developed and increased; that a clever dog imparts his cleverness and peculiarities to his progeny. Man has become what he is by study, observation, thought, and education. Why should not the dog, by careful training, improve likewise?

If I may so term it, it is the force of *sympathy* and constantly breeding from the same good strain that has made all sporting dogs what they are. To make my meaning clearer, it is my opinion that a breed of dogs carefully tutored, generation after generation, acquire from habit and usage an innate predisposition to hunt intuitively, which causes them to be superior to dogs whose faculties have not been so developed and cultivated, or in other words, imparted an inborn goodness.

A great controversy has been going on of late years as to whether our breed of setters are *better* or equal to those of the olden time. I am decidedly of opinion *they are not.* No man living can judge so well if this statement is correct or not, as that noted old sportsman, G. H. Ramsay, J.P., Derwent Villa, Tyneside, who has shot from boyhood over all the wastes and wilds of the border counties, from Christenbury Craigs to Keelder Castle and Mounsey Know, decidedly the very best localities in the United Kingdom for black game and wild shooting. He is yet so noted for his skill and sight, though over *eighty-two* years of age, that the Duke of Northumberland

went purposely to witness a man of his age shoot without the aid of glasses, and so pleased was his Grace at this patriarchal sportsman's skill, that he took a grouse to the castle to show his guests.

With the exception of a few kennels of choice blood, and which have been most carefully guarded, I fear, nay I am sure, the setter has greatly *degenerated* and *mongrelised.*

I make this statement because I have seen most of the breeds of former days, and having paid great attention, and very closely observed them, can remember many superior specimens to numbers of those I see at present.

This degeneration has partly been caused by the carelessness of the modern sportsman. There are also other causes: the now fashionable system of driving and not using dogs so much as formerly is one; the habits of game having altered, that is, become more wild and unapproachable from their being more shooters, less cover; a greater population is another; but the chief cause of all is by inattention, and promiscuous and injudicious *crossing,* and not retaining *purity* of *blood.*

This is the cause of the decay of that magnificent species of dog the *Irish setter.*

As an instance I may remark, that if I had not kept my breed of 'Blue Beltons' pure, this rare old strain would have degenerated in a similar manner.

When my dog 'Dash' was first exhibited as a specimen of the 'Blue Belton,' I believe most of the public and judges had never seen the breed. Since then many of this strain bred by me have been shown, and tested at trials; amongst which I may enumerate Mr. Garth's (Q. C.) 'Daisy,' Mr. Purcell Llewellin's 'Countess,' Mr. Dickens's 'Belle,' and others.

The following points will apply to most of the English setters, except where colour is concerned, and certain peculiarities of some breeds, which will be explained in their proper places.

I will commence with the head, which should be long and rather light, though not too much so. I do not like a heavy-headed or deep-flewed dog, it indicates sluggishness.

Nose large, black, moist, cold, and shining, slightly depressed in the centre, prominent, and expanded at the nostrils.

The nostrils should be open.

Eyes bright, large, full, mild, and intelligent, and free from rheum or discharge, in colour dark hazel; but these will be darker or lighter according to the colour of the dog.

Jaws and teeth level.

The ears set low on the head, and flat to the cheeks; they should be rather long than otherwise, not too-pointed, and thin in the leather. A prick-eared dog is unsightly; it gives him a bad appearance, and not that *roundness* of head as when the ears are low set on, and back.

The neck should be muscular and lean, slightly arched at the crest, and clean cut where it joins the head: towards the shoulder it should of course be larger and very muscular, not throaty, or any pendulosity below the throat, but elegant and blood-like in appearance.

The shoulders I consider one of the most important parts of the setter. They should be well set back, or very oblique, the more so the better—upright shoulders are very objectionable—the blades of them long; he should be short and level in the back. The shorter a dog is in the back—that is, from the shoulder blades to where it joins the hind quarters in the back loins—the more power and strength. This formation is similar to the machinery of a steam-engine—short above, and the power of stroke, spring, or leverage below; or, in other words, *short above* and *long underneath.*

Chest rather wide, and deep in the brisket; with good, round, widely-sprung ribs; a *narrow-chested* dog can never last;[1] not

[1] My great object has been to obtain power and strength in the fore-quarters; not alone in depth of chest but wide through the chest (as witness 'Dash,' 'Countess,' 'Moll,' 'Cora,' 'Nellie'), and many others of this formation, thereby giving greater freedom for the play of the heart and lungs; in fact, a close, compact, well-built dog. This is what I have been endeavouring to obtain for the last fifty years—not a loose, leggy, weedy animal.

slack, but deep in the back ribs—that is, well ribbed-up—the loin broad, slightly arched, strong and muscular.

Hips well bent and ragged, the more bent the better ; here is the propelling power.

The fore-arm big, very muscular ; the elbow well let down. Pasterns short, muscular, and straight.

The feet very close and compact. The foot I prefer is the hare, or spoon-shaped one, which enables him to have free action on the pad or ball of the foot instead of the toes, which should be well protected by hair between them, and which grows as fast as it wears away.

Slack loins are fatal: dogs of such formation are not as a rule lasting.

The more bent the stifles the better. The crouching attitude which the author of 'The Dog' so much objects to, is, in my opinion, the object to obtain, as it denotes a greater leverage or spring ; the more bent the stifles the greater the power ; as, for instance, tigers, leopards, cats, &c., whose attitudes are crouching, are remarkable for their easy power of spring. Of all the setters I have ever seen those having this formation have been the fastest and most enduring, as the greater the leverage the easier the stroke.

The thighs long, that is, from hip to hock.

The tail should be set on high, in a line with the back ; medium length, not curled or ropy, to be slightly curved or scimitar-shaped, but with no tendency to turn upwards ; the flag or feather hanging in long pendant flakes.

The feather should not commence at the root but slightly below, and increase in length to the middle, then gradually taper off towards the end ; and the hair long, bright, soft and silky, wavy but *without curl.*

From the back of his head, in a line with his ears, the hair ought to be slightly wavy, long, and silky, which should be the case with the coat generally, and a tendency to part down the back. A setter cannot have too much coat for me, as it is indicative of the spaniel blood.

Quality of coat is a great desideratum, and denotes high breeding; the slight fringe on the throat should, however, leave the throat and neck angle pronounced.

The fore-legs nearly down to the feet should be well feathered, as well as in the breeches: you cannot have too much of it, as long as it is soft, bright, and silky.

In his range he should be fast, bold, and free, carrying his head well up, whip or feather his stern well in his gallop, quarter his ground evenly, and hunt independent of any other dog; good tempered, and turn on his game like lightning, and on his point as rigid and motionless as a statue.

There is another form of setter some like: deep and narrow chested; as thin through as a slate or hurdle. These dogs can go very fast; but for how long?

I have known many of these kinds of dogs brought down to Scotland, and after the first day or two they were perfectly useless.

We have another formation in the setter which is also excellent, namely, great depth of chest, but *flat* sided; it should, however, be accompanied with width through, to allow the heart and lungs free action.

Of the two formations, I prefer the round-ribbed and deep-chested dog. In short, the formation of a setter should be that of a strongly-built spaniel.

CHAPTER II.

THE NAWORTH CASTLE, AND FEATHERSTONE CASTLE BREED OF SETTERS.

THERE is a very fine old breed of setters, at present but little known. It has been, and still is, in the possession of the Earl of Carlisle, Naworth Castle, Brampton, Cumberland; Lord Wallace, Featherstone Castle, Cumberland; and Major Cowan, of Blaydon Burn, Northumberland, so well-known as the blood-hound authority.

This breed of setters I remember fifty years ago, when I rented the moors belonging to the late Earl of Carlisle, in the vicinity of Gillesland, the debatable country—the very locality where the *fracas* took place between 'Dandie Dinmont' and the Gipsies when rescued by Brown.

This moor is commonly called the *Wastes*, a description of which is so graphically given by Sir Walter Scott in 'Guy Mannering.'

This rare old breed has probably been retained in the above mentioned families as long as any other strain has.

The Featherstone Castle breed has been looked after by *three* generations of Prouds, Edward Proud (now pensioned off) and sons.

Those at Naworth Castle, by Grisdale, who has been there for forty years or more, but now a pensioner. How long the breed may have been in the family of Major Cowan and others, in Northumberland and Cumberland, I cannot say.

The distinguishing colour is liver and white, they are very powerful in the chest, deep and *broad*, not narrow or *slaty*, which some people seem to think is the true formation of the setter.

If there is any fault to find with them it is their size; they are a little too big and heavy.

There is a great profusion of coat, of a light, soft, silky texture.

The distinguishing characteristic is a tuft of long, soft, silky hair on *the crest of the head*, which is rather larger and heavier than the generality of setters.

They are particularly strong and powerful in their fore-quarters, beautifully feathered on the fore-legs, tail, and breeches; easily broken, very lofty in their carriage, staunch, excellent dogs, and good finders. Though liver, or liver and white, is not at present a recognised colour in shows, my belief is that there are as good dogs of this colour as any other.

The Featherstone Castle breed was brought into notoriety by the late keeper, Edward Proud, and so much were they appreciated by shooting men, that they went all over the country, and even to Ireland. This was more than half a century ago.

There is also another celebrated breed at Edmond Castle, near Carlisle, Cumberland. This likewise is liver and white, without the tuft. These dogs are much lighter, and more speedy looking than the tufted ones.

They are very deep, wide, and powerful in the fore-quarters; well bent in the stifles, so much so as to give them a cat-like crouching attitude.

Laidlaw was the keeper's name who had charge of them. These setters were noted all over the country for being first-class and very enduring.

The late Mr. Heythorne, of Melmerby Hall, near Penrith, had this breed when he shot with me—at which time I had the shooting of Pitmain, Kingussie, Invernesshire—and first-rate dogs they were.

Mr. Garth's (Q.C.) 'Bess,' a winner at the Shrewsbury trials, was from this kennel.

LORD LOVAT'S BREED.

Black, white, and tan.

Another celebrated, tested, and well-known breed has long been in the possession of that ever-green veteran sportsman, Lord Lovat, Beaufort Castle, Beauly, Invernesshire. This strain is black, white, and tan.

His lordship shot long with Alexander, the late Duke of Gordon, and he informed me that his Grace had black and tans, and black, *white*, and tans, but *preferred the latter*.

A celebrated dog of Lord Lovat's, black, white, and tan, named 'Regent,' was well known in Rosshire and Invernesshire. Old Bruce, his lordship's keeper, told me this dog would never be beaten. Numbers of his strain and colour were in Lord Lovat's kennels when I last saw them. They have long been valued by many sportsmen for their great excellence and beauty.

I think I am correct in stating, that this breed has never been exhibited at dog shows.

They are very handsome, good, and possessed of great powers of endurance; kept for utility and not for show.

Bruce, so highly valued by his lordship, and now retired on pension, had charge of this kennel, which is at present managed by his son, David Bruce.

I consider this was one of the best kennels in the North.

THE EARL OF SOUTHESK'S BREED.

Black, white, and tan.

There is also another breed called the 'Southesk,' belonging to the Earl of Southesk, in Forfarshire, black, white, and tan. These dogs are very fine, strong animals, large in size, and extremely well feathered, round barrelled, powerful, and strong in their fore-quarters.

If any defect in their formation, they are apt to be somewhat slack in the loins, and too long in the leg; notwithstanding this they are well known to be good and staunch dogs, and highly appreciated.

The breed was well known to me when I rented the forest of Birse, adjoining the Glen of Dye, the property of Sir James Carnegie, now Earl of Southesk.

THE EARL OF SEAFIELD'S BREED.

Black, white, and tan; and lemon, or orange, and white.

This is one of the most beautiful strains I have ever seen; there are few better than that of the Earl of Seafield, of Balmacaan, Urquhart Castle, Invernesshire.

Perhaps there is no breed of setters possessed of a greater profusion of coat, I should say, save 'Russians;' they had more coat, of a floss silky texture, and more feather than any other strain of setters I have ever seen.

Sheriff Tytler, of Aldoury, near Inverness, also had, or has, some of the same breed, as well as the late General Porter, of Inchnacardock, near Fort Augustus, and several others in that district.

I had many opportunities of seeing this pure and beautiful breed when I rented the Dunmaglass shootings and Boleskine Cottage, on the banks of Loch Ness, Invernesshire.

The formation of these dogs is as follows: Head rather short and light, full hazel eyes, ears well set on, of a soft silky texture. They are very similar to toy spaniels on a large scale, and covered with long floss-like silky hair on body, fore-legs, flag, and breech; medium sized; good hunters; good dispositions, and easily broken. The objectionable points are their peculiarly upright shoulders, straight hind-quarters and spareness of body, which makes them go rather short and stilty.

The late Earl of Derby, and Lord Ossulston, when shooting at Coulnakyle, in Straspey, Invernesshire, had a beautiful breed

of lemon and white setters, obtained, I believe, from Lord Anson.

This breed in formation was very similar to my own lemon and white ; they were very powerful in the fore-quarters and remarkably handsome.

LORD OSSULSTON'S,
NOW EARL OF TANKERVILLE'S BREED.

Jet black.

Another breed of rare excellence, and greatly appreciated by practical sportsmen, was that of Lord Ossulston, Chillingham Castle, Wooler, Northumberland. These were jet black, with beautiful bright, soft, glossy coats—a colour that our fastidious judges of the present day would probably ignore, and not even notice, however good and handsome they might be, as not being fashionable. It *was* certainly one of the best, most useful, and beautiful strains I ever saw ; and for downright hard work could not be surpassed. I have, too, seen an excellent and beautiful breed of light fawns, also a self-liver coloured one. Both these strains were first-rate.

Lord Hume, of Tweedside, Wilson Patten, Lancashire, and the late Harry Rothwell (that celebrated old sportsman of fox-hunting notoriety, who resided near Kendal, Westmoreland), had also a similar breed of blacks, well known, and eagerly sought after in those days by all the leading sportsmen in that country.

Lord Hume's strain were famous all through that district, and the Lammermuir Hills, for their acknowledged good properties, stoutness, and powers of endurance.

The last of this beautiful and useful breed, as far as Harry Rothwell was concerned, was a dog named 'Paris,' in the possession of his nephew, Robert Thompson, Esq., Inglewood Bank, near Penrith, Cumberland, and who shot with me for several years on the Forse Shootings, Caithness, which I rented. It

is a *fact* that this dog—a medium-sized one—ran almost *every day* for *six weeks*; and he was, when required, as good a retriever as I ever saw. Mr. Ellis, the Court Lodge, near Yalding, Kent, who shot with us, can testify as to the truth of this statement.

Wilson Patten's breed, similar to the above, were very good, and noted for their hardy constitutions and innate love for hard work.

The colour of Lord Hume's and the other named gentlemen's breeds was a most beautiful jet black, as bright and brilliant as the blackest satin.

Long, low dogs, with light heads; very strong and powerful in the fore-hand; well-bent, ragged, cat-like hind-quarters; capital feet; hare-footed, but not too much arched at the toe.

They had not a great profusion of coat, but what there was, was of a first-rate quality and particularly silky.

These dogs were exceedingly close and compact in their build, and noted all through the country for their endurance; they were good rangers, and very staunch.

MR. LORT'S BREED.

Mr. Lort, of King's Norton, near Birmingham, has also a beautiful and excellent breed of setters, descended principally from the strain of the late Richard Withington, Ashfield House, Pendleton, Manchester, an old friend of mine, and who shot with me many years in the Highlands.

They are black and white, and lemon and white; long silky coats; hardy, enduring, and good rangers.

Mr. Lort, from judging so constantly at dog-shows, has given this fine strain but little chance, and they are not known as they ought to be; but, from what I am told and believe to be the case, there are no *better*. He at one time possessed, I believe, a black bitch, similar to the jet blacks of Lords Ossulston and Hume.

Setter-breeders are under the greatest obligations to this gentleman, for his unflagging endeavours to improve the setter: and he spares no time, trouble, or expense.

His pointers, I am told, are very good and handsome.

THE LLANIDLOES (WELSH) BREED.

Whites and blacks.

This is a very ancient and well-known breed, but I am sorry to say it is dying out. They are particularly stout and hardy dogs, never tire, and unflinching in their endeavours to find game. A close, compact animal, and very handsome. The *old pure breed* was milk-white, or, as it is called there, a 'chalk-white.'

Their coats are not quite so soft and silky as the other breeds I have named, but they are very good, and admirably adapted for Wales.

There is another old Welsh strain, similar to the above, jet black, equally good, hardy, and enduring. In their own country they cannot be beaten, being exactly what is required for the steep hill-sides.

The Llanidloes are still to be had about that country, and good specimens are sometimes picked up at a small figure.

THE RUSSIAN SETTER.

White, lemon and white, liver and white, and black and white.

These dogs are but little known in this country. The late Joseph Lang's I have repeatedly seen. Two of them were brought down by Mr. Arnold, of London, to my shooting-quarters, Dunmaglass. He had given thirty guineas a-piece for them as puppies, and had them very carefully broken by an English keeper.

They were not at all good specimens of the class, and, as working dogs, comparatively useless. So disgusted was he with them before he left, that he shot one, and gave the other away.

I have never seen but *one pure* specimen, which was in the possession of the late Lord Grantley, at Rannoch Barracks, head of Loch Rannoch, Perthshire.

This dog was a magnificent type of the Russian setter, buried in coat of a very long floss silky texture; indeed he had by far the greatest profusion of coat of any dog I ever saw. 'Old Calabar,' who knows well what a setter is, told me that, as a young man, and living at his father's place, near Virginia Water, that the late Mr. Turner, head-keeper to Her Majesty there, had a beautiful breed of Russian setters, which the late Prince Consort was very fond of. They were good but most determined, wilful, and obstinate dogs, requiring an immense deal of breaking, and only kept in order and subjection by a large quantity of work and whip; not particularly amiable in temper, but very high-couraged and handsome, an enormous quantity of long silky white hair, and a little weak lemon colour about the head, ears, and body; and their eyes completely concealed by hair.

'Old Calabar' got a brace of these puppies, had them well broken, and took them to Franee; but, after shooting to them two seasons, and being disgusted with their wilfulness and savage dispositions (they would take no whip), sold them to a French nobleman for a thousand francs (40*l.*), and considered he had got well out of them.

CHAPTER III.

THE BLACK TAN OR GORDON SETTER.

I NOW come to this fashionable and favourite breed. They are a class I am well acquainted with, having twice been over to Broughty Ferry, near Dundee, for the express purpose of inspecting the kennel of that veteran sportsman (now, alas! gone to other hunting grounds), Major Douglas, contemporary of the late Alexander, Duke of Gordon, and Lords Panmure and Wemyss. The black tans I saw at Broughty Ferry—also those at Mr. Thompson's, Broughty Ferry—both exactly the same strain, were strong, powerful, but, I understood, headstrong dogs, and took a deal of breaking.

In addition to these I have seen many black tans tested by gentlemen who have shot with me. As far as my observation goes, they lack the endurance of the other breeds I have named; they are coarser and heavier made, and have not the light and agile action of the blacks, the black and whites, the black greys, or blue and lemon and white Beltons I have tested.

It is an acknowledged fact that the black tans are not so speedy as other breeds; they are nervous, and more prone to be gun shy.

I have ever found the coats of the black tans coarser, stronger, and more wiry in texture than the jet blacks, black and whites, blue Beltons, and other strains, and not of that fine floss-silky quality it ought to be. They are longer in the leg, and looser in the loin, heavier and coarser in the head, thicker in the neck, more throaty than other breeds, and not so clean-made in the limbs, or so short in the back; neither are they so close in the feet.

Nevertheless, they are very beautiful dogs, and I have seen many good black tans, more particularly those of the lighter build.

The Rev. Mr. Hutchinson, who writes under the *nom de plume* of 'Sixty-one,' had, or has, as good a breed of black tans as anyone, being much lighter, and not nearly so cumbersome as the ordinary class.

Black tans, as a rule, have sour coarse heads; shoulders loaded, heavy, and too upright; are heavy and thick limbed; large feet, often too straight and stilty in the hind quarters; tail thick and ropy. Many of the black tans have obstinate stubborn tempers, and not particularly easy to break.

Two years after the decease of Alexander, Duke of Gordon, I went to Gordon Castle, purposely to see the breed of setters. In an interview with Jubb the keeper, he showed me three black tans, the only ones left, and which I thought nothing of. Some years after, when I rented on lease the Cabrach Shootings, Banffshire, belonging to the Duke of Richmond, adjoining Glenfiddich, where his Grace shot, I often saw Jubb and his setters; *then and now, all the Gordon Castle setters were black, white, and tan.*

'The Druid,' now alas 'gone from our gaze,' gives the following description of them in *Field and Fern*. Although they were not what I call 'light in frame, or merry workers,' still I will quote poor Dixon:—'Originally the Gordon setters were all black and tan, and Lord F. G. Halliburton's "Sweep," Admiral Wemys's "Pilot," Major Douglas's "Racket," Lord Breadalbane's "Tom," and other great craftsmen of the breed of that colour; now all the setters in the Castle kennel are entirely black, white, and tan, with a little tan on the toes, muzzle, root of the tail, and round the eyes. The late Duke of Gordon liked it; it was both gayer, and not so difficult to back on the hill side as the dark-coloured. They are light in frame and merry workers; and, as Jubb says, "better to put up half a dozen birds than make a false point." The composite colour was produced by using black and tan dogs to black and white bitches; and at a sale in July, 1836, eleven setters

averaged 36 guineas. The five year old "Duke," black and tan, fetched two guineas below that sum, he was bought from Captain Barclay, and got another "Duke" still more famous than himself, from "Helen:" she was also the dam of "Young Regent," a black, white, and tan, which joined the Brethly kennel, at 72 guineas; and his lordship did not grudge 80 guineas for "Crop," although one of her ears had been gnawed off in puppy-hood by a ferret. Lord Lovat's, Sir A. G. Gordon's (of Cluny), dogs have been the only crosses used for some time past at Gordon Castle. "Sailor's" beautiful skull caught us at once, and Jubb might well say "he knows everything." "Dash" lay dignified and apart during the revels, and there was no passing by "Young Dash," and the neat "Princess," by "Rock," from "Bell." A dozen pups by a dog of Lord Lovat's, also of the Gordon Castle breed, were out at quarters drawing nurture from terriers and collies.'

If there is a fault more objectionable than another in Gordon setters, it is their want of staying and enduring powers. I leave it, however, to those who have tested them to decide if my statement is correct or not.

'Kent' was a dog without a pedigree, and never did any good for this beautiful breed of setters, even. 'Idstone' says, 'his stock was not satisfactory; he propagated his own faults, and introduced others; for, as a rule, his offspring feared the gun.'

The points of the black tan are pretty much the same as the English setter. They are shorter in the tail, and have not such a profusion of feather or flag. The coat I should give a preference to would be a silky and slightly wavy one, and not *flat*; intensely black. The tan, a deep mahogany or burnt sienna colour. There should be a well-defined spot of the same colour over each eye; the cheeks, the linings of the ears, the throat and lower part of the forelegs, the feather on the back of them as high up as the arm, inner parts of the thighs, and breeches, all tan of the same hue, blended nicely together; the vent, thighs, and belly all tan. Some do not object to a white frill

on the chest, neither do I ; but it should not be—there should be no white. To render these dogs lighter, give them better heads, more endurance, but to keep their colour, my idea has always been to cross with the blood-red Irish setter ; but this, I am told, has been done.

FRED 4:e



CHAPTER IV.

ENGLISH SETTERS.

MR. E. LAVERACK'S BREED.

Black greys or flints, blue, or lemon and white Beltons.

A BREED acknowledged to be one of the oldest and best we have. Perhaps no strain has been more appreciated by numbers of eminent sportsmen than this.

I do not make this assertion with a view of praising them. As I have said elsewhere, they do not require it. It is a fact that I have run dogs of this breed for *three* weeks daily, from 9 A.M. to 7 P.M.; and others possessing the same blood have done the same.

So highly thought of were they by the late Marquis of Breadalbane, that *every* setter in his kennels at Taymouth Castle, Perthshire, consisted solely of this breed; he would have no other.

This strain was also at Inverary Castle, Argyleshire, the seat of the late Duke of Argyle, and held in great estimation by him.

At the same time there were some black tans in his kennels, but the 'blues' were preferred. Both these breeds I often saw there when I was in the habit of fishing Loch Awe, in that vicinity.

The late Marquis of Bute, of Rothsay Castle, had also the same blood; as well as the late Duke of Northumberland, Mr. Ramsey, of White Hill, near Edinburgh, and others.

The breed was known many years ago all through Cumberland, Northumberland, and the border counties. I introduced

it into Perthshire, Badenock, Lochaber, Strathspey, Caithness, the Isle of Islay, and the north of Ireland, where I have rented shootings for the last forty-seven years.

In all these localities there are still living many keepers and others who can testify to their general utility, goodness, and enduring powers.

I can say with truth it has taken me a lifetime (being, as I have said, over seventy-three years of age) to retain and keep perfect this breed.

Let it be distinctly understood I do not say this strain is superior to the others I have named and seen tested in the Highlands of Scotland and elsewhere. The breeds I have alluded to are excellent; and although most of them have not been exhibited at dog shows, being considered too valuable, and the risk too great, yet they are just as good as if they had won a thousand prizes, and the 'Gold Medal at Paris' included.

Perhaps it will not be amiss to give the pedigrees of 'Fred 2nd.' and 'Dash.'

PEDIGREE OF MR. LAVERACK'S SETTER DOG 'FRED 2nd.'

FRED 2nd

DASH, Blue — MOLL, Black, White and Tan

STING, Blue — BELLE, Black, White and Tan

ROCK, Black and White — CORA, Black and White, no Tan

REGENT, Black, White and Tan — JET 1st, Black and White, no Tan

PILOT, Black and White — MOLL, Orange and White

DASH, Black and White — BELLE 1st, Orange and White

PONTO, Black Grey — OLD MOLL, Silver Grey

PEDIGREE OF ENGLISH SETTER 'DASH.'

- **DASH 2nd...** (Blue mottled)
  - **STING.....** (Blue mottled)
    - **ROCK 2nd.....** (Black and White)
      - **REGENT....** (Black and White)
        - **PILOT .....** (Black and White)
          - DASH 1st
          - BELLE 1st
        - **MOLL 2nd ..**
          - DASH 1st
          - BELLE 1st
      - **JET 1st.....** (Black and White)
        - **PILOT .....**
          - DASH 1st
          - BELLE 1st
        - **MOLL 2nd ..**
          - DASH 1st
          - BELLE 1st
    - **CORA (BLAIR'S)** (Black and White)
      - **REGENT....** (Black and White)
        - **PILOT .....**
          - DASH 1st
          - BELLE 1st
        - **MOLL 2nd ..**
          - DASH 1st
          - BELLE 1st
      - **JET 1st.....** (Black and White)
        - **PILOT .....**
          - DASH 1st
          - BELLE 1st
        - **MOLL 2nd ..**
          - DASH 1st
          - BELLE 1st
  - **CORA 2nd....** (Black and White)
    - **FRED 1st.....** (Lemon and White)
      - **ROCK.....** (Lemon and White)
        - **ROCK .....**
          - PILOT
          - MOLL 2nd
        - **PEG .....**
          - DASH 1st
          - MOLL 2nd
      - **MOLL 2nd...** (Orange and White)
        - **DASH 1st....**
          - PONTO
          - OLD MOLL
        - **BELLE 1st ..**
          - PONTO
          - OLD MOLL
    - **CORA 1st.....** (Black and White)
      - **DASH 1st....** (Black and White)
        - ..... PONTO
        - ..... OLD MOLL
      - **BELLE 1st ..** (Orange and White)
        - ..... PONTO
        - ..... OLD MOLL
- **MOLL 3rd...** (Black, White and Tan)
  - **FRED 1st....** (Lemon and White)
    - **ROCK 1st.....** (Lemon and White)
      - **ROCK.....** (Lemon and White)
        - **PILOT .....**
          - DASH 1st
          - BELLE 1st
        - **MOLL 2nd ..**
          - DASH 1st
          - BELLE 1st
      - **PEG.....** (Lemon and White)
        - **DASH 1st....**
          - PONTO
          - OLD MOLL
        - **MOLL 2nd ..**
          - DASH 1st
          - BELLE 1st
    - **MOLL 2nd.....** (Orange & White)
      - **DASH 1st....** (Black and White)
        - ..... PONTO
        - ..... OLD MOLL
      - **BELLE 1st ..** (Orange and White)
        - ..... PONTO
        - ..... OLD MOLL
  - **BELLE 2nd..** (Black, White and Tan)
    - **ROCK 2nd .....** (Black and White)
      - **REGENT....** (Black and White)
        - **PILOT.....**
          - DASH 1st
          - BELLE 1st
        - **MOLL 2nd...**
          - DASH 1st
          - BELLE 1st
      - **JET 1st.....** (Black and White)
        - **PILOT.....**
          - DASH 1st
          - BELLE 1st
        - **MOLL 2nd...**
          - DASH 1st
          - BELLE 1st
    - **CORA (BLAIR'S)** (Black and White)
      - **REGENT....** (Black and White)
        - **PILOT.....**
          - DASH 1st
          - BELLE 1st
        - **MOLL 2nd...**
          - DASH 1st
          - BELLE 1st
      - **JET 1st.....** (Black and White)
        - **PILOT.....**
          - DASH 1st
          - BELLE 1st
        - **MOLL 2nd...**
          - DASH 1st
          - BELLE 1st

All the above-mentioned dogs, except OLD MOLL and PONTO, were bred by Mr. Laverack, and are descended from the pure blood (supposed to have at that period been pure for thirty-five years) of the late Rev. A. Harrison's, near Carlisle, who bred OLD MOLL and PONTO, which animals Mr. Laverack procured in the year 1825; since that time he has kept up a continuous strain of pure blood. OLD MOLL and PONTO were both Blue Beltons. Consequently, Mr. Laverack having had this strain for more than forty-four years, makes a continuous blood for over eighty years.

The formation of this breed is as follows:—Head long and light, not snake-headed, or deep-flewed, but a sufficiency of lip; remarkable for being very strong in the fore-quarters; chest deep, *wide*, and ribs well sprung behind the shoulders, carrying the breadth of back to where the tail is set on; immensely strong across the loins; shoulders very slanting or oblique; particularly short from the shoulders to where the hind-quarters meet (I put it all in plain language, using no technical terms that perhaps some would not understand). A setter should not rise, or be too upright in the shoulder, but *level* and *broad*; tail well set on in a line with the back, *rather drooping*, scimitar-shaped, and with plenty of flag; legs remarkably short, and very short from hock to foot and from knee to foot; feet close and compact; thighs particularly well bent or crooked, well placed and close under the body of the animal, not *wide* or *straggling*.

Colour black, or blue and white ticked; coat long, soft, and silky in texture; eyes soft, mild, and intelligent, of a dark hazel colour; ears low set on and close to the head, giving a round development to the skull.

There is another variety of the same strain, called the Lemon and White Beltons, exactly the same breed and blood. These are marked similar to the blues, except being spotted all through with lemon colour instead of blue, and precisely of the same form and characteristics; equally good, hardy, and enduring. Having possessed the above strain for nearly fifty years, I consider there are none superior.

They are possessed of all the necessary requisites for general utility, viz., *great speed*, nose, staunchness, method of range, and finding, and, without any exception, one of the most enduring breed of setters I have ever come across; indeed, I may say with truth, if they possess any superiority over others, it is their indomitable, enduring, hard-working properties.

The jet blacks, before alluded to, in the possession of Lord Ossulston, Lord Hume, and the late Harry Rothwell and others, are a breed which are nearly or quite equal in goodness. A dog named 'Trimmer' (blue Belton) was one of the best I ever pos-

sessed. This animal had an extraordinary gift for finding, always hunting for the draft of air. So high-couraged was he that you could not tell when he was drawing on game; until he sprang into his point, he gave no prior warning. I think I may say I never knew him make a false point. This dog displayed wonderful sagacity in running birds: for instance, pointing an old cock-grouse, or a running brood, he knew by the scent when the game had left him; then, instead of footing, immediately sunk, or dropped down wind, thirty or forty yards, and re-pointed. If a long distance from him, he would repeat this manœuvre three or four times prior to getting up to him, his sagacity telling him he could find game much quicker by taking advantage of the *wind* than '*footing*.'

I am convinced this dog pointed from the scent emitted from the body of the *bird*, and not from the scent attached to the *heather*; this extraordinary animal was bred between brother and sister.

CHAPTER V.

THE IRISH SETTER.

PERHAPS there has been no greater controversy than on the merits of the Irish setter. When pure and thoroughly broken, they are an admirable and excellent breed of dogs, being possessed of great powers of endurance and speed.

So highly do I value the true blood belonging to the Irish that I have visited Ireland four times for the express purpose of ascertaining where the pure blood was to be found, with a view of crossing them with my Beltons.

I very much regret to say, that after all my trouble and efforts, I found that this fine and magnificent old breed has degenerated, owing to the carelessness and negligence of the Irish in not having kept it pure.

I believe it is admitted by some of the leading sportsmen in Ireland, among whom I may name John King, of Firbane, Colonel White, of Newton Manor, near Sligo, and others, that there is scarcely any breed now to be relied upon for their purity. 'Sixty-one,' an Irishman, and who probably knows Ireland, and the breed of setters, as well as anyone, does not, I am told, hold them in the highest estimation. As far as my own researches and observations have gone, the late John La Touche, of Harristown, possessed this breed in its greatest purity.

One of the best specimens of the Irish setter I ever saw was in the possession of Rowland Hunt, of Leicestershire, who has the Braemore shootings, Caithness. This dog, he informed me, he had purchased at the late Marquis of Waterford's sale.

Another magnificent specimen I saw at Cockermouth Castle,

Cumberland, belonged to the late General Wyndham; both these dogs were blood red, with a black shade on the tips of their coats.

The one I saw at Cockermouth Castle I consider, without any exception, to have been the most magnificent specimen of an Irish setter I ever saw. The General informed me that when he commanded the troops in Ireland he saw and shot over the best specimens of this breed, and stated some were excellent, others worthless. The dog alluded to he told me was made a present to him by an Irish nobleman, whose name I have forgotten.

This dog was very long in the head, particularly low, very oblique in his shoulders, wheeled or roach-backed, very deep and *broad* in the chest, remarkably wide behind the shoulders, and very short in the back and legs, more so than any Irish setter I ever saw; he had an immense profusion of coat, with a tinge of black on the tip of his ears.

I should have bred from this dog but for the following reason, and I think I was right: no one was ever able to break him, and his stock were frequently black.

Rowland Hunt's dog also got black puppies occasionally, evidently denoting there must have been a black stain in the breed.

Captain Cooper's 'Stella,' a sister to his 'Ranger,' who obtained the first prize at Birmingham and Dublin, also occasionally throws black puppies. Notwithstanding this stain of black in the breed, the best and most perfectly formed Irish setters I have ever seen had this stain or tint of black; which I should never object to, although I am well aware many of the most eminent Irish breeders state that they ought to be *without any tint of black whatever in their coats.*

As far as I have seen and been informed, for general goodness and working properties those possessing this tint of black have been quite as good, if not better, than those without it.

Mr. Shorthose's Irish setter 'Ben,' blood red with a tinge of black, who has obtained upwards of forty prizes at exhibitions, gets a portion of black puppies.

It is the opinion of many well-known breeders that the pure

Irish setter should be blood red in colour, a mahogany colour nose, and as I have before said, without any tint of black in the coat, and should never get or throw black puppies.

My firm belief is, that no Irish setter exists without throwing back occasionally to black. I can understand breeders preferring the blood red, without this tinge of black, and retaining the blood red colour in preference, but my idea is that those having a tinge of black are the better dogs, although the colour may be objected to.

There is another colour of Irish setters, *blood red* and *white*, quite as pure, indeed some people maintain, of greater antiquity and purity of blood, than the blood red.

Both the blood red, and the blood red and white will throw each colour, evidently denoting they are of the same strain.

I think the handsomest red and white Irish setters I ever saw were in the possession of the two Misses Ledwidge, of Beggarsbush, near Dublin: 'Stella,' the dam, and two sons, named 'Old York,' and 'Young York.'

'Stella,' although blood red and white, was the dam of Mr. Dycer's celebrated blood red setter 'Dan,' well known in his day for his goodness. This dog was sire of Captain Hutchinson's 'Bob.'

Miss Ledwidge informed me that she possessed this breed for half a century or more; and Mr. La Touche's keeper at Harristown, when I visited his kennels there, pointed out a blood red and white setter as the best he had.

I believe the Misses Ledwidge's kennel was as pure as any in Ireland: I was told they originally came from the Butler family.

Another, and one of the best breeds, which have probably been kept as pure as any in Ireland, are those of the Hon. David Plunket and Lord De Freyne, of Coolavin, co. Sligo.

Of the two colours, blood red and blood red and white, I admire the latter the most, they being in my opinion the handsomer of the two. Mr. Barton, co. Wicklow, had a large kennel

of the blood reds and whites ; there are doubtless other breeds in Ireland considered as pure as those named.

As far as my experience goes of those I have seen worked, there are few, if any, setters more valuable for general utility than the Irish, provided you can get them with a sufficiency of point ; but, I am sorry to write it, the major part are very deficient in this requisite, and not to be relied on ; but when they have it they are admirable dogs.

Those I have seen were rather light, if anything too light in the head, wanting a little more squareness about the nose and lip ; their ears are too high set on the head, being often in a line with the skull, which gives them a prick-eared appearance.

A thin, spare, lathy body in general, and in my opinion too long in the legs ; their shoulders are generally well placed, low and oblique, with a drooping stern ; coat rather harsh, more harsh and wiry than that of the English setter, neither is it so bright or silky ; temper obstinate, fiery and impetuous, which detracts from the major part of the breed, but still there are exceptions, and notwithstanding some people say 'they never saw a good Irish setter,' *I have*, although rarely; but when they are really good they are a first-class dog, none better. At the late Dublin show the specimens were very poor indeed, excepting Captain Cooper's 'Ranger.'

I should probably have crossed with some of the above-named dogs, but on consideration I was afraid they would not *nick* with mine, and I was afraid of their acknowledged failing, 'insufficiency of point.'

Visiting Mr. Purcell Llewellin some short time ago, I noticed in his kennel a young red Irish dog, called 'Marvel,' a remarkably pure specimen of the breed, though a little too light in colour. From a conversation I had with Mr. Llewellin I quite approve of the system he is adopting in endeavouring to rectify the defects of the male and female by judicious breeding. This gentleman is evidently a great enthusiast, and deserves success and the warmest thanks of setter breeders for his great energy and perseverance in endeavouring to bring the setter to the

highest state of perfection, not forgetting Mr. Statter, of Stand Hall, Manchester, and Mr. Garth, Q.C. Though the two last-named gentlemen are not, I believe, breeders of the Irish setter, yet they have very beautiful strains of their own, which always command high prices.

The three most perfect specimens of setters I have ever seen were Lord Lovat's 'Regent,' black, white and tan; the late General Wyndham's blood-red Irish setter before alluded to, and the Rev. A. Harrison's blue Belton 'Old Moll;' these three animals were particularly strong, powerful, and compact in their build.

CHAPTER VI.

ON BREEDING AND THE VALUE OF PEDIGREE.

HAVING exhausted the different strains of setters I am acquainted with, I shall now proceed to treat on the subject of breeding, and the necessity of *pure blood.*

Perhaps nothing is so generally little studied and understood, or properly attended to, as breeding, which requires not only great experience, observation, and knowledge of *back ancestry*, but also great patience and perseverance.

The first thing to be attended to in breeding is to consider what object the animal is intended for. My idea is *general utility* for the gun is the great *desideratum.*

One of the first objects to obtain, if possible, is *perfection* of *form*, as best adapted for speed, nose, and endurance.

The next, and which I consider paramount, or of as much importance as physical form, is an *innate* predisposition to hunt, and point naturally in search of game, and without which innate properties mere beauty of colour and perfection of external form (however desirable) are but secondary considerations to practical sportsmen, and simply valueless.

After having obtained these essential requisites, another most important thing is to select a bitch with a strong, robust, healthy constitution, regardless of colour, though if you can get it so much the better.

The dog must possess the same proclivities. The object in selecting males and females of strong and vigorous constitutions is, that no matter how good the breed may be, still you cannot expect healthy progeny from weakly parents, as according to

our most celebrated naturalists, Buffon and Cuvier, 'like begets like,' not *externally*, but *internally* and *mentally*.

The female is first to be selected. I like a long, well made, roomy, finely formed, and intelligent bitch, not less than two, and not exceeding eight years of age; the dog the same.

I should never breed from a bitch until she had attained her maturity. What is meant by *purity of blood*, is breeding from ancestry of *known* and tested goodness, which is only discoverable by having actually worked them yourself, or seen them worked, thereby enabling you to judge of the natural dispositions, capabilities, sagacity, and adaptability for finding game.

A great deal has been said about *in-breeding*; many hardly understand what is meant by it, or what in-breeding is.

My dogs are more *inter-crossed*, and *inter-bred*, than directly bred in and in.

There are several secrets connected with my system of inter-crossing that I do not think advisable to give to the public at present. I can only say better constitutions, better feeders, and hardier animals than I have, do not exist.

It must not be supposed I am prejudiced and obstinate in my system of breeding. I have *tried* crossing, or letting my blood loose ten or a dozen times, but the result has always been unsatisfactory; therefore I stick to inter-crossing with my own strain, as I have ever found it answer best.

I believe every noted breeder, whether of racehorses, horned cattle, sheep, pigs, or poultry, will admit that they are indebted to *purity of blood* for the class of animals they possess. On this point I am bigoted.

There appears to be a law in nature we do not understand. How is it buffaloes in the prairies of North America, and the herds of wild animals in the South of Africa, in fact everything in creation, birds, beasts, insects, fishes, reptiles, &c., continue to reproduce their own species, with unerring and marked characteristics, without ever crossing.

This law of nature has induced me to follow it, and to inter-cross or in-breed with my own strain.

Every breeder who has attained superiority over others in any class of animals knows well if they get a strain of impure blood in their breed how difficult it is to eradicate it. This taint will come out, though it may have lain dormant for years, and through many generations.

There is no better test of a pure breed of setters than a perfect uniformity of race, that is in colour, form, and coat, and never throwing back to some other colour and form unknown to the breeder.

This uniformity or certainty of back ancestry, known to be good, can only be obtained by purity of race.

Crossing, or cross-bred animals, will never produce, to a *certainty*, uniformity of race. As I before stated, I have tried the crossing system *repeatedly*, but the result has always been a failure.

It is true the first cross you obtain may be very handsome and very good, but these scarcely ever reproduce others possessing their own good qualities.

On the other hand, a pure breed will invariably transfer their goodness, and *all* will be similar in form and goodness. Of course, like other animals, some will be more beautiful and perfect than others; but this certainly will never be obtained by breeding from cross-bred parents.

As many gentlemen have sent bitches to my dogs, may I ask if their produce has been improved or not?

These gentlemen ought not to expect that a pure-bred sire will produce purity out of an impure or cross-bred female. It is true a pure-bred sire will improve the progeny of an impure or cross-bred female; but to make perfect the breed, the *issue* should be *bred in again*, or UP *to the pure-bred sire.*

After having selected suitable parents, the next thing to be attended to is the bitch coming into 'season' or 'heat.' This is first discoverable by a slight enlargement of the teats; a few days after this the parts begin to swell, and discharge or bleed, which it generally does for nine days; and she remains nine days in season. But they vary according to age. Some

young bitches go out of heat quicker than old ones ; therefore there is no positive rule. Some remain in season longer than others—a deal depending upon condition, temperature of weather, and being kept in a state of quietness.

There is one thing breeders oftentimes do not attend to ; that is, the bitch being *too fat*. She should be rather lean to ensure fruitfulness. Neither should the dog be too gross. All breeders of any species of animal know from experience the necessity of having the females rather thin than otherwise.

Some maiden bitches are exceedingly fastidious, refusing to allow the dog to have union ; thus causing great trouble and annoyance. In this state there is only one mode to be adopted —the bitch must be held, and ravished. I have had a number of bitches in this state, and have been obliged to act in this way.

Many have an idea that a bitch so held could not conceive and have puppies, which is an error. I have had scores of puppies from bitches so treated. Aged bitches are comparatively little trouble.

It does not follow that one who has been warded is always to have progeny : many prove barren, from some cause or other ; as witness in all kinds of animals—birds, fishes, reptiles, and even the human race.

Another idea some have is that a dog cannot get a bitch in whelp unless he is *locked*. This is not the case. I have proved on several occasions that there is no absolute necessity for their being *tied* or joined together. Bitches have often proved in whelp by the dog having had connection with her but separating immediately.

Is there not some given law in nature which will not allow animals to be too prolific ? Every naturalist and observer must have noticed animals are not equally fruitful every year. The same applies to game—as some seasons there is a greater quantity than others.

I should always advise that bitches be warded *twice*, the *last* three or four days of their being in season.

Some dogs will not copulate with bitches until the last day or

two they are in use. I will mention a remarkable instance of this.

When I resided in the Lake district, I sent for a dog from Carlisle, called 'Ponto,' six weeks prior to my requiring his services. When the bitch came into season, and very desirous, being strongly in heat, this dog would not attempt to have connection. Day after day I tried him, but all to no purpose. Afterwards I took her to another dog; and as 'Ponto' positively refused the bitch, I sent him back to Carlisle, thirty miles distant.

Fully a week after she had been warded, to my great annoyance and surprise, 'Ponto' one morning made his appearance. I turned him into the stable where the bitch was, considering her out of season; but to my astonishment he instantly lined her. How is this to be accounted for, except the dog knew there was only a certain time of heat that the bitch was fit to be connected with? It is evident to me he had been thinking of her, and considering she was then in proper season, came of his own accord thirty miles to serve her.

I have met with several dogs, like 'Ponto,' who refused to line a bitch till the last day or two of heat.

Bitches generally go with young nine weeks, but this is not always a certain rule; some will give birth three or four days prior, sometimes three or four days later, than this time.

I remember a very curious occurrence of a bitch pupping one pup a *week* prior to her time, and a *week afterwards* producing nine others. The *first pup lived*, as well as those born subsequently.

When a bitch gives birth, each puppy comes enveloped in a caul, or thin skin. The instant it is ejected, the mother bites the skin to liberate her offspring, and then cleanses it with her tongue. In liberating the pup from the skin, it sometimes happens she mutilates the tail with her teeth, thereby causing a crooked tail; this, however, does not often occur. The best mode is, as soon as the pup is cleansed, to take it away

and place it in a basket before a fire, wrapped up in flannel. Every puppy should be so treated till the mother has done pupping.

The reason for removing the young as they are brought forth is to prevent the mother killing them, in the agony of parturition, by pressure.

As soon as she has done giving birth, put the earliest puppies back to suckle, and the others by degrees.

The first two or three days after pupping, give the bitch nothing but a little gruel made of oatmeal (well boiled) and milk, or sheeps-head broth with oatmeal; no solid food. It is of great importance always to have the oatmeal *well cooked*; which should be boiled for an hour and a half or two hours, and not boiled too fast.

The number of puppies to be kept on the mother depends in a great measure upon the constitution of the bitch, and how she is fed. Six is an abundance for any bitch to suckle; the remainder should be put to a foster-mother. Where a valuable litter of puppies is expected, it is always well to have a foster-mother in readiness. The bitch may die in, or after pupping, &c.; there are many contingencies the breeder must be prepared for.

When three weeks old, it is as well to commence giving them a little milk, sweetened with sugar, twice a day, to teach them to lap; this they will soon do.

Wash them at this age weekly with warm water and soft soap, with about a tablespoonful of carbolic acid in it, in order to destroy the lice all puppies are subject to. When weaned, continue to wash weekly, to prevent vermin accumulating.

At a month or five weeks old, wean the puppies; at any rate do so at six weeks, unless there is a weakly one, in which case it may be left a little longer.

After the puppies are six or eight weeks old, the bitch, if she can get access to them, will feed them by vomiting her food at intervals: this is a common occurrence.

I will relate a curious instance of a bitch suckling puppies not her own.

I had two bitches, sisters. One was put to the dog, the other not. When the bitch that had been warded pupped, and the young ones were four or five days old, the other bitch fought the mother off, and suckled them herself.

It is well known that all bitches have a certain quantity of milk, whether in pup or not. I took the real mother and gave her her puppies again, allowing the other bitch to remain with her sister; when both laid amicably together, suckling the young ones; nor did they fall out again.

Another curious circumstance occurred with a bitch of mine. She came into season, but was kept from the dog. A *month* afterwards she came into season again. I look upon this as a very uncommon occurrence.

Puppies should be fed three or four times a day up to three months old—little and often. Give them food easy of digestion, such as milk and bread-crumbs, milk and oatmeal, sheep's-head broth, and so on.

Warmth and dryness with good feed are the great preventives of distemper, for which I am certain in my own mind there is no *known cure*. I will give two remarkable instances of distemper.

Bruce, Lord Lovat's keeper, related to me the following cases of recovery from distemper.

A young dog had been paralysed in his limbs for upwards of three months. He ordered an underkeeper to take and 'throw him into the river' close by. This the man did, and tossed it into the Beauly. The poor animal was washed away by the current. To the surprise of all, two or three days afterwards he crawled home, and recovered. This was a cold water cure.

The other was a dog in a similar state. Being tired of seeing it about, he told one of the men to 'knock him on the head and throw him on the dung-heap.' He was thrown on the dung-heap, but not 'knocked on the head,' but was partially covered over with manure. Strange to say, this dog recovered. I may call this a Turkish bath cure.

Puppies, indeed all dogs, should lie very dry and off the ground

in trays. To prevent them crawling under, which a tired dog will sometimes do, there should be a guard to let down in front. The dogs, then, must get on their beds.

Nothing gives kennel lameness sooner than damp, or lying on the floor of an ill-drained kennel. They should have a *well paved yard*, the bricks or paving-tiles set in cement, all four sides sloping to the centre, where there should be a patent trap to take off the water. A yard must always be flagged or paved, otherwise the drainage is imperfect; if not paved, it soon gets saturated with filth, is very offensive, and most unhealthy both to man and dog.

As I have elsewhere remarked, it is well known to every experienced breeder that the *first* cross-bred animal generally shows a great deal of beauty, form, and quality; but breeders ought to be exceedingly cautious not to breed from any animal, no matter how handsome *externally*, or of known *tested* goodness, *without ascertaining his blood and pedigree.*

I will give one or two instances to show the absolute necessity of such precautions.

I once saw two dogs, own brothers—one as magnificent a specimen of a pointer as you could wish to look on; which dog I bought for a friend after trying him, he was a first-rate performer in every way.

His own brother—the same litter—was as good and beautiful a specimen of a setter as his brother was a pointer. And both were such good workers, that many people bred from them. But mark the result: their stock were most mongrel wretches, not only in appearance but in performances.

Another instance was a setter named 'Blucher,' in the possession of a late friend of mine, William Pearson, of the Yews, near Kendal. This dog I shot over, along with his master, for weeks. He was a first-class and extraordinary good performer, and the admiration of all the sportsmen in that district, who sent bitches to him, *myself amongst the number.* Singular to say, this dog never got a puppy worth anything.

These instances are given to caution men who are breeders never to breed from an animal, no matter how handsome or good, unless they know the *back ancestry*.

I should never object to breed from a dog or bitch, even if they were not *externally* perfect in form, provided I was sure they came from a good and pure strain.

CHAPTER VII.

ON BREAKING.

YOUNG DOGS vary much in their tempers, and their early predisposition to hunt and find game. I have frequently shot over setters at *nine* and *eleven* months old, as steady as need be, and continued to shoot over them daily the whole season; some come sooner into work than others, get their strength, and furnish quicker.

Like children, many are more precocious than others. My breed hunt, range, point, and back intuitively at six months, and require comparatively little or no breaking.

The system of tuition I adopt is to take the dogs to my shootings in Scotland, uncouple, and let them chase everything (game) until they are tired, having previously accustomed them to lie down at the word 'Drop.'

After having run themselves down, they naturally point and back. When pointing, walk quietly up, slip a thin cord through the collar, and stand behind, making no noise, holding the cord rather slack in your hand. After the dog has stood some little time, he naturally, to ascertain by his nose where the game is secreted, will prick up his ears prior to making his spring at feather or fur, whichever it may happen to be. In attempting to do so, jerk him sharply back with the cord, calling 'Drop!' Keep him down until the birds are out of sight, to teach him patience; then withdraw the cord, and let him range.

By repeating this, the dog will very soon be broken. When I rented the shootings of Cabrach, in Banffshire, belonging to

the Duke of Richmond, I and my keeper, Alexander Rattray (now keeper to the Duke of Richmond, Glenfiddich), by this system once broke *eight* dogs in *six* days; and all at the week's end were as steady as could be—pointing, backing, footing, and free from 'chase.'

When you get the dog to drop well to the word, it is easy to teach him to do so at 'wing, or fur;' to 'down charge,' to come close to heel, and ware fence is nothing to teach.

My dogs are invariably broken on the open moors, and not in small enclosures, which always cramps their range and checks their spirits; it is distressing to hear a breaker crying out every instant 'ware fence,' whistling and shouting: you cannot be too quiet on *all* occasions.

I seldom use whip or whistle, but allow my dogs to use their own natural sagacity in making their casts and finding game.

I have ever found those dogs who range wide turn out the best. It does not follow because a dog ranges wide he will not range close. Where game is plentiful a wide-ranging dog must *necessarily* become a close ranger because the game stops him; he cannot get far without finding, his natural sagacity tells him to hunt close; it is his high courage and anxiety to find game that causes him to range wide.

A wide-ranging dog too saves you a great deal of walking. Every shooting man knows that he may occasionally tramp over two or three miles without coming across anything; here it is a wide-ranging dog is of greater utility than a close ranger.

Many English gentlemen and keepers have an idea that Scotch keepers are inferior to the English. I have found the reverse. Men from living in the wild moorland districts of Scotland have greater opportunities of seeing and understanding the habits of the game found in those localities.

I give the names of a few I came across, all first class men in their vocations.

Lord Lovat's old and much respected keepers, David Bruce and son; Alexander Fraser, keeper to Mr. Fowler, of Glenmazeran, Invernesshire; Stewart, keeper to the Earl of Seafield,

at Balmacaan, Urquhart Castle, Invernesshire; Sinclair, keeper to Sir Robert Sinclair, Dunbeath Castle, Caithness, also keeper to the Duke of Portland, Langwell, Caithness; Mackenzie, keeper to John Ramsay, Isle of Islay; Hogg, keeper of the forest of Brise, Aberdeenshire; and Robert Robertson, Fealar, head of Glen Tilt, Perthshire, keeper to the Duke of Athole.

When I rented the Macartney shooting, co. Antrim, North of Ireland, my keeper was William Winter, now keeper to the Earl of Rosse. Any of these men can testify as to the goodness of this breed. David Burnett, long keeper to Mr. Winsloe, Coulnakyle, broke thirty or forty of this breed for Mr. Winsloe, formerly tenant of the Coulnakyle shootings, Strathspey, Invernesshire.

All these men I have named I found thoroughly understood the habits of game in their own localities, and were admirably adapted for the situations they held, highly esteemed and respected by their employers.

There is no doubt that they are better calculated for their own country than English keepers; and *vice versâ*, the English keepers understand better their country, and the rearing of lowland game, pheasants, partridges, &c. In this department the English are decidedly superior.

I would further mention that I consider Scotch keepers quite as good breakers of dogs: they do not *over break*, which many English keepers do.

The men I have named, and many others, have managed to break dogs to the entire satisfaction of their masters. How they contrived to walk without the aid of the 'Idstone boot,' and tutor their dogs without using the 'Idstone whistle,' which is useless unless tuned to a *particular key* (*B flat*), and the 'Idstone whip,' one similar to that used at the 'Bala trials,' that 'sensational whip,' which excited such general admiration, I am at a loss to imagine. As for the 'Idstone trap,' it is *no new invention*; *I can show one exactly similar more than fifty years old.*

Many years have passed over my head, bleached my locks, and withered the sap of youthful vigour since I took my gun and dogs and made bonnie Scotland my home. I loved it then, I

love it still, and ever shall. I yet go there annually, and feel ten years younger when I catch sight of those wild, glorious, healthy, purple-clad mountains, far away from the busy hum of the world, and over-crowded and ill-drained cities. It is in Scotland I find repose, contentment, amusement, and health.

I cannot understand *Pater Familias* taking his wife and family away to the Continent, or to some expensive watering place for the autumnal months, when we have such lovely and magnificent scenery within twelve hours of us. I may be an enthusiast on this point. The used-up *blasé,* worn out with dissipation and late hours, broken in health, constitution, and spirits, is often now recommended by his doctor to take a Highland shooting. What for? not with the idea that he may kill much game. He is too prostrated, too feeble for a long tramp over the hills. It is not for the sake of shooting, but to wean him in some measure from dissolute habits, which, if persisted in, must eventually carry him to a premature grave. It is in the hopes of saving him, invigorating him, and restoring his shattered constitution.

I remember the remark of an old Highlander to a cockney sportsman who was grumbling at the country and asking 'what was to be found in it?' Sandy replied, 'Hout mon, there's health behind every rock and stane' (stone).

Burns's beautiful lines are now recalled to my memory:—

> Now westlin winds, and slaught'ring guns,
> Bring autumn's pleasant weather;
> The moorcock springs, on whirring wings,
> Among the blooming heather.

These lines again bring to mind many stories I heard; scenes I have seen, in years long gone by, never to return. Relentless old Father Time serves us all alike; shows no favour to rich or poor, and with that terrible scythe of his cuts all down in turn. I will here 'break point' and tell you of

SANDY DAVIDSON,

The Braemar Poacher.

There was, many years ago, no more celebrated character in Scotland than Sandy Davidson; a fine noble-looking fellow he was too, considerably over six feet in height; luxuriant hair, dark beard and moustache; and dressed in his kilt, with rod in hand, or gun over his shoulder, was a man that one would look twice at before meddling with: such was Sandy Davidson.

This extraordinary man was the terror of game preservers in the shires of Aberdeen, Banff, and Inverness. He shot and fished in the Robin Hood style all over these counties.

This famous Highland poacher was, however, often detected. When such was the case, and he was caught *in flagrante delicto*, the proprietors, his friends, or keepers, merely said that if he would pledge his word not to shoot or fish there again, no further notice would be taken. His word *once* given was never violated; but if brought before the magistrates and dealt harshly by, woe betide that owner; he at once fearlessly told the bench 'he should make a point of shooting over and getting double the value of the fine off the estate;' which he carried out to the letter, as proprietors found to their cost.

'Sandy' always shot, fished, and dressed as a Highland gentleman, in a kilt, with one or two attendants to carry his game, and out shooting had ever a brace of setters with him.

The end of this fine hill-man was sad. He and a comrade were shooting on a moor called Glenbucket, Aberdeenshire, and were located in a small peat house on the moor, through the door or opening of which many a gallon of Highland whiskey that had never paid, or was ever likely to pay, a farthing duty, had found its way. Running short of provisions, 'Sandy's' comrade went down to the village of Rhynie to get a supply. A heavy snow storm coming on prevented his returning. The poor fellow waited several days for his coming back, but in vain; so at last in sheer

despair he started for Rhynie, but alas! he never reached it, he perished on the way there, and was found in the snow dead, 'stiff and stark.' The men who discovered him told me they never saw so 'gruesome' (awful) a corpse.

Sandy used to go annually to the festivities at Gordon Castle to dance the national dance named 'Gillie Callum,' or the sword dance. He was sadly missed, for he was a general favourite with all.

The first time I ever came across him was on Dee side, fast into a salmon, and his brace of setters at his gillie's heel.

There is another little scrap I will relate here, called

THE POACHERS' LAIR.

When I rented the shooting of Fealar, at the head of Glen Tilt, belonging to the late Duke of Athole, I one day came across a singular mound, or small stack of heather; this my keeper, formerly an old poacher (*i.e.* poachers are oftentimes the best of keepers), pointed out to me as 'the poachers' lair,' or bed, which was made in this way: the long heather had been pulled up, and a large hollow mound made with it; the tops of the heather turned *in* and the stalks *out*. When night comes on, the poacher and his dog get inside, having a lid or top to pull over them, and remain all night dry, warm, and comfortable.

A poacher would be nothing without his dog. I was told of a singular instance of the sagacity of one.

A noted poacher named Armstrong, living in Nicol Forest, Bewcastle, Cumberland, had been out shooting on Christenbury Craigs. On his return, being wearied out, he laid down to sleep on the moor; some hours afterwards he was awakened by his dog pulling at his cap, and barking, which aroused him; he got up, and with much difficulty reached his home. He found out the dog *had* been *home*, and returned to awake him.

The man stated if it had not been for the faithful animal's

pulling at his cap, and awakening him, from the hard weather it would have been his last sleep.

A singular circumstance once occurred to me. Shooting one day on Pitmain Moor, Kingussie, Invernesshire, on a sudden we missed one of our dogs; we were certain he had not left us. After searching for an hour or more, whistling and calling, but to no effect, we suddenly heard a low whimper *under* the ground. The dog in ranging had fallen through some long dry heather covering a chasm, or hole. To get him out was a difficulty, but was overcome by turning Angus, the keeper, topsy turvy, and letting him down head first, holding him by his legs. He managed to reach the dog, and we pulled them both up. If we had not happened to have heard the poor animal whine, he would never have got out, but miserably starved. This accounts for many dogs lost on the moors and never heard of again, also for the sudden and mysterious disappearance and escape of several poachers, who, when surrounded and hemmed in by a party of shooters, suddenly disappeared through the ground as if by enchantment. These men no doubt, knowing every inch of the ground, made for these holes or chasms, and thus baffled their pursuers.

These excavations are caused by the under-current of water in winter and during the floods; afterwards they are grown over by the luxuriant heather and lichen. They often run a long way down the hill-sides, and thus enable poachers to escape easily.

I would impress on anyone taking shootings in Scotland how much better; how great a saving of time, trouble, money, and disappointment; how much more pleasant and satisfactory, it would be to them to have a *small* stud of *good* and useful dogs instead of a *large* and comparatively worthless lot; but it is too often the case that there are a large quantity of dogs where a fourth would amply suffice.

Before I quit this subject perhaps it may not be uninteresting to give the returns of five years' woodcock-shooting in the Isle of Islay. It cannot, I fear, be done now, as thinning and cutting away the underwood spoils the covers.

Woodcocks shot round Ardenserney Cottage by P. McKenzie, keeper to the late Campbell of Islay.

1848,	Woodcocks bagged	512
1849,	„	485
1851,	„	392
1852,	„	481
1853,	„	469
Same year, killed by Campbell of Islay and his friends		437
	Total . . .	2,776

I shot with McKenzie, and we have often killed from 35 to 45 cocks in one day.

CHAPTER VIII.

DOG SHOWS.

A GREAT deal has been said for and against 'dog shows.' I consider them a step in the right direction, if honestly and honourably carried out, without favouritism (which I think it is by the majority), and the judges competent; but many of the judges of the present day are far *too young*, and have no experience whatever, and again they *judge too many classes*; if this continues it will be a death-blow to dog exhibitions.

No young man can have the experience of sportsmen of riper years; it is men of long and extensive knowledge I would have as judges.

I would also have more gentlemen to judge the different classes than there are at present. Of course the expense would be greater, but then the public might be satisfied, which is not always the case now. It does not follow that one who is acquainted with one particular class of dogs should know more about them than others who possess the same kind; there are probably many others who know quite as much, or more, about them than he does. Therefore I would never have one man set himself up as THE authority, no matter of what class. With shooting dogs I would never consider judges of terriers, &c., competent to adjudicate, as many of these men have never even taken out a game certificate or seen game dogs worked. For such men to judge these classes is simply an insult to exhibitors.

Dog shows cause a pleasant rivalry, and bring together a large assemblage of canine wonders, which enables visitors to see the various breeds, and judge for themselves if the specimens exhibited are good, bad, or indifferent; thereby enabling those

who are desirous of improving their own breed to select models which will conduce to the improvement of the strain they fancy.

It is an undoubted fact that the major part of the sporting dogs exhibited have never been tested on game, but are merely specimens of external form. The public know nothing whatever of their working properties, whether they are good or worthless.

It is remarkable what numbers of miserable specimens often obtain prizes. Judges differ and, I suppose, ever will; but one thing I am convinced of, that judging from points, as was proposed some time ago, is all nonsense, and will never find favour, or come into general practice.

Although a judge can only decide from external form, nevertheless, if he is a man of long and extensive experience in classes, let us say of pointers or setters, by having seen most or many of the best breeds, he can see at a glance unmistakeable signs of high breeding which an inexperienced judge would not be able to discern.

With regard to non-sporting dogs, you can only judge from external form, beauty, and points of breed. Many of these are magnificent specimens of their respective races, which is the result of careful breeding.

Many possessed of the best strains object to send their dogs to shows, owing to the distance, risk, expense and trouble, and having no confidence in the officiating judges. And you must bear in mind that the value of a dog does not consist in the number of prizes he may have taken at shows, but in the quality of his stock, and if he has improved the breed.

It is almost a certainty that any young dog who has not had the distemper will catch it at an exhibition. I consider the reason is, that the atmosphere in the building is impregnated by a poisonous effluvia, caused by the large number of dogs. So certain am I in my own mind of this, and having lost numbers of very valuable young dogs by sending them to shows before over distemper, that I am resolved never to do so again till they have safely passed through this dangerous malady. Aged dogs I always put in quarantine for a week after their return, and

wash them well with a solution of carbolic acid. I cannot impress too forcibly the necessity of this precaution. My object in exhibiting has not been so much for gain's sake as to see if any were present worth breeding from, remembering always that it must be from a strain of good and *known* excellence.

Dog shows are not only very fashionable, but very numerous now all over England.

Birmingham I must class No. 1, because it has been so long in existence, and so honourably and well conducted, and I believe the committees have ever done all they could to give satisfaction to the exhibitors and public. The above observation applies as well to the committees of the Crystal Palace shows, which have likewise given great and deserved satisfaction to all. I cannot pass over this subject without paying a tribute to Mr. John Douglas, the manager of these shows; and I believe all exhibitors and the public will admit unanimously, that they are much indebted to him for his excellent arrangements, courtesy, and assistance to all interested. This show and Birmingham will always hold their own.

CHAPTER IX.

FIELD TRIALS.

THIS is also a step in the right direction, though a somewhat unsatisfactory one, the short time allowed for the trials not being sufficient. Every man of experience, and who understands shooting, is well aware that many dogs work magnificently for half a day, or even a day or two, but are unable to last any longer. Now endurance, as I have observed elsewhere, is one of the most essential points. It frequently happens that a high-couraged, good, resolute dog does not steady and settle to his work at once; he may be a little too free at starting, but this dog might be superior in every way to others who had beaten him. Again, some dogs are of a shy and nervous temperament, and cowed by the assemblage of people and strange faces that surround them.

Nevertheless, as far as it goes, it is a trial of speed, nose, and method of finding, but in reality not a satisfactory test of those more important qualifications, viz., powers of endurance, and general goodness on *all kinds of ground* and on *every species of game*. Still, winners at these trials may be possessed of all that is required in the setter or pointer.

Dogs must be expressly prepared and coached for this now fashionable amusement. That is, they must be under the greatest subjection and discipline, and even, after all, a superior dog may be beaten by an inferior one, owing to the shortness of the trials, and luck being against him; as, for instance, each dog going in a separate direction, or hunting independent of each other, which is the proper way, it may so happen that the best dog goes over ground where there is little or no game, and the

inferior dog may cross ground where there is plenty; thus, after all, there is a great deal of chance work, which would not be the case if the trials were longer, for the superior dog would be certain to come in.

I consider it impossible at trials to judge of many of the qualifications wanted in a shooting dog. You have only one species of game, and one kind of ground, to test them on. It does not follow that because a dog is good at partridges, that he is to be first class at grouse or other game. I have frequently seen excellent partridge dogs perform very badly on wild moorland game, and lack that bold independent range and lofty carriage necessary for extensive ranges. This I shall explain more fully in the 'relative merits of dogs.' You can only judge at trials of pace, breaking, backing, staunchness, style, and method of finding game. This, however, is a good deal, and I dare say ere long some one will hit on an improvement for trials. What is required is more time, but I do not know how this can be done where there are so many competitors, except by doubling the entrances.

Let it be particularly understood I do not wish to detract from the merits of these trials; on the contrary I am an advocate for them.

I am informed by competent people that both Cornwall and Hampshire are not well adapted for field trials; the latter county is acknowledged by hunting men to be one of the very worst in England for scent, scantiness of cover, and is not noted for an abundance of birds.

Cornwall, though a long way off, and in many places hard and stony, is better than Hampshire, both for scent and cover. At Vaynol, the beautiful property of Mr. Assheton Smith, you have an abundance of birds, fine air and scenery, and a good open country, where you can see everything without pressing on the dogs.

As Mr. Assheton Smith strictly preserves the hares for coursing, they are very numerous, so it is a rare place for discovering if a dog is 'free from fur' or not.

Good as this county is it is not equal to Shrewsbury; the cover there is still better, and the fields much larger, than in Wales; the scent, too, I should imagine would hold stronger. All agree that the Shrewsbury country is a first-rate one for trials. It is central and not so far away as Vaynol; but before Shrewsbury can ever come to the fore again there must be great changes.

I should think Norfolk would be the county *par excellence* for field trials. That is supposed to be *the* best locality.

All who are fond of these trials owe a great deal to those gentlemen who have so kindly given the use of their manors.

In dismissing this subject let me say I do not imagine *spring trials* to be of any great service. Dogs require to see game *killed* to them, otherwise it disheartens them. I should prefer no spring trials, but more autumnal ones, and a greater length of time given; without which trials will never give general satisfaction.

CHAPTER X.

GENERAL MANAGEMENT.

A VERY important subject is 'general management.' Often have I seen beautiful and valuable dogs in a state of filthiness; ill-housed, ill-attended to, and ill-fed, with masses of putrid flesh hung up for them to gnaw at (no dog will show a good coat who is fed on bad raw meat), and without water. How can anyone expect dogs to do well when such is the case?

A dirty and badly-washed house destroys the health and scenting powers of the animals, to say nothing of the diseases it engenders. Great cleanliness is absolutely necessary both in yard and lodging; the sleeping house should be daily well washed, and the beds shaken up. Many keepers remove the excrement as soon as dropped, but at any rate it should be done every morning. The animals should be *well* and *regularly* fed once a day, that is, grown-up dogs. The hour for feeding depends on a great measure how you are using them; when dogs are not in work about 2 P.M. is a good time.

The bed, no matter on what you bed them, should be constantly changed, and the trays on which they lie sufficiently high to ensure ventilation and keep them from the damp. The benches should fold against the wall, so that you may wash the flags underneath them. If the dogs crawl under, which tired ones will sometimes do, have a guard made to prevent their creeping under them.

When I visited the shootings of Gairnshiel, Aberdeenshire, then rented by the late Lord Cardigan, but now belonging to the

Prince of Wales, I observed an excellent plan in the yard. On one side was a bench for the dogs to lie on, and bask in the sun, instead of lying on the flags; the bench had hinges, so that it might lie flat against the wall when not required; the iron legs folded up as well.

No kennels were better adapted than those I had at Fealar, head of Glen Tilt—a piece of ground on a hill-side, enclosed with large palings. The interstices between them ensured thorough ventilation. There was a division inside for dogs and bitches, and in each of the covered sleeping apartments raised benches. This description of kennel I prefer to high walls, being better ventilated. From using this style of kennel, and having them well cleansed and flagged, I never, all the years I shot in the Highlands, had a case of kennel lameness.

The sleeping apartments should have doors, to close in cold or wet weather.

Always use *old*, *round* ground oatmeal, Scotch or Irish, *well boiled*; as new meal purges too much. Of course there must be some kind of meat or broth with it, such as boiled cows' noses (which is most capital food, being all flesh), milk, or graves, and vegetables. Swede turnips occasionally, mixed with the porridge, is good for all dogs, particularly in summer.

Should mange get into your kennel, dress with train oil, oil of tar, and sulphur vivum; and use as an alterative, and cooling diet, Swede turnips, cabbage, &c., in their food.

Dogs that are hard worked, as well as those not going to be used the same day, should be fed twice, morning and evening. Flesh, if you can get it *good*, is an excellent change, being the natural food of all canines. I have used *good horseflesh* for a month or six weeks daily, and never found it affect their scenting powers; but dogs fed on flesh must never be gorged or have much on their stomach when required for use.

I have tried every remedy for distemper, and am convinced, from my own experience and that of others with whom I have compared notes, that for certain types there is no positive cure. Good nursing, warmth, and assisting nature is better than all

specifics. Change of air has a most beneficial effect. I have had dogs that have been two months attacked by it in England, but by taking them to Scotland they have soon been cured.

Distemper I believe to be a blood-poison, proceeding from the peculiar state of the atmosphere ; for I have known it break out virulently both in England and Scotland at the same period, and not transmitted from dogs coming in contact with others who were affected.

The kennels should every now and then be hot lime-washed, to destroy ticks or vermin ; and once a week—oftener in summer—sprinkled with Condy's deodorising fluid, or carbolic acid. Kennels should be perfectly dry, well ventilated, well drained, and *well paved.*

Dogs for exhibition must be washed, though as a rule I am not a great advocate for it ; if kept clean, they will only occasionally need it, or when hard clay or dirt is glued to their coats. Take time in this case : soak the places thoroughly with warm water, and do not use the comb, or brush roughly ; you will only draw out lots of hair, which will not grow again till they change their coat for a fresh one.

On returning from shooting, never put your animals away carelessly, as many do ; remember, they have been working hard for your pleasure. Let them be well fed, immediately on their return, with plenty of clean straw on their benches. If properly cared for, they will be fresh and willing for the next day's work. By attending to these few simple rules, mange and distemper will be almost unknown to you.

Your dogs, when not in work, should always be taken out every morning for a couple of hours ; it will be conducive to their health. Exercise is essential, as it keeps their feet hard and in order. Bear in mind always that a sore-footed dog can never run, and that nothing injures man or beast more than close confinement.

If you have no knowledge of the ills which dog-flesh is heir to, consult some one who has ; and in cases where operations are to be performed, unless you are 'up in it,' and have con-

fidence in your own powers, you had better let the veterinary do it for you. It will be cheaper to pay a guinea or half-a-guinea than kill your dog. Many diseases can be checked by constant and prompt attention—such as canker, distemper, both kinds of mange. The yellows I am not so certain about, for when the animal is severely attacked, I look upon it as nearly hopeless. Diarrhœa can easily be stopped, if taken in time.

CHAPTER XI.

ON SCENT.

THIS is a question that up to the present time has never been satisfactorily settled, and I suppose never will be. It is well known to hunting men that some counties will only carry a good scent when it is wet and cold; others when it is dry or hard. In some shires it is better on fallows; in others on grass. There is no accounting for it, and no absolute rule that we know of to go by.

Scent is nothing more than the effluvia or evaporation emitted from any animal or bird, and is elevated or depressed by the weight of the atmosphere and current of air. That scent attaches itself to the herbage, heather, grass, rushes, or bushes the quarry passes through, we all know; and that it is stronger or weaker according to the nature of the ground and the pace the game passes through it. Of course, any bird or beast 'dwelling' leave a stronger trail than they would if they were to pass through quickly.

Every shooting man of experience must have often noticed that whenever a 'runner' gets out of the heather, &c., on to bare ground, that the dog soon looses the scent, and it is much more difficult for him to retain. The reason is obvious—there is no herbage to hold it.

A dog will work much quicker on bare ground to recover 'scent.' His instinct and sagacity tell him that there is nothing for it to adhere to—that it soon evaporates; and unless he can take it up quickly, he will lose it for ever. Directly the bird gets over the bare ground and enters cover, then it is that the scent becomes good again.

The reason that lost dead birds, and those that are wounded, who never stir, are so difficult to find, is because they leave no scent.

All good and experienced dogs, when 'footing,' do so quickly, knowing well that unless they 'road' fast the game must be lost to them, having evaporated.

When in a boat, flapper-shooting, I have found that the scent of the ducks *lies on the water*; the birds, swimming about, leave it on the surface. The weight of the atmosphere being heavy at the time, as it generally is in July and August, prevents its being blown off the surface.

On the Moors, it is extraordinary the distance the air tainted with scent is carried. I have time after time seen dogs rear themselves on their hind legs to 'wind it' in the atmosphere floating over their heads; and after finding the direction it came from, go slower and slower in the right line till they got their 'point.'

Huntsmen often fancy hounds will carry a brilliant scent, and race away with their heads up from 'find to finish;' instead of which they cannot run a hundred yards on the line without throwing up. At other times, when you imagine there could not be a worse hunting day, they will run into their fox without a check. Scent is very fluctuating, much depending on the soil and state of the atmosphere.

All shooting men know well that the deadly killing time for game is after 4 P.M. About this hour the air becomes cooler and moister; the dew commences to fall, and the birds to move; and the dogs hunt keener, because the scent lies.

As a rule, the best scenting days are when *scent rises*. It is then that many dogs who generally carry their heads low will hunt high, to catch the taint which is borne and wafted away in the current of air.

There is not the slightest doubt that scent rises or is depressed according to the atmospheric pressure; damp, rain, and other causes will affect it as well.

CHAPTER XII.

RELATIVE MERITS OF DOGS.

THERE is a great deal to be said on the 'relative merits of dogs.' This subject would fill a volume in itself. To give my ideas on this, and as concisely as possible, I prefer bold, independent, high-couraged dogs, and as long as they are *staunch* they cannot be too *fast*.

The higher they carry their heads for draught of air the better; for as a rule, dogs that *hunt for the wind* find most game; but this is not always the case, as I will prove by an instance that occurred to myself.

Many years ago when shooting in Annandale in very close sultry weather, a friend of mine came to see a brace of setters I then had, and which I had worked for eight years. They were first-class animals in every way, self-liver-coloured ones, and own brother and sister.

On an average the dog could make six points to the bitch's one, because he always hunted for the draught of air, or for the wind. The bitch on the contrary carried her head low; for three days in succession, she made four or five points to the dog's one, and beat him all to nothing.

My friend said—'Laverack, you speak very highly of the dog, but in my opinion the bitch is by far the better animal, and worth two of the dog.'

I replied, 'Wait till a breeze springs up, and you will see I am right.'

The fourth day a breeze did spring up, and the dog literally walked away from the bitch taking nearly all the points, and hardly giving her a chance.

The reason the bitch found so many more birds the first three days than the dog, was simply that he was hunting for the wind. There being no breeze the scent lay low, therefore he was hunting *over* it; the bitch on the contrary hunting low, got all the points, and beat the dog.

I have seen some exceptions, though but rarely, of dogs adapting themselves to the state of the atmosphere, hunting low in sultry weather, and high in a breeze. Such animals I need not say are very valuable.

It is not always the fastest dogs are the best finders. I have known capital finders who were not particularly speedy. It is very easy to be deceived in the working properties of dogs. When I lived in Cumberland I heard a wonderful account of a dog (a cross-bred pointer). I sent for him to try him against one of mine, a blue-grey Belton, 'Trimmer,' the one named at page 24. This 'nonpareil' set out at a marvellous pace—it was absolutely terrific; he carried himself magnificently, and behaved beautifully, and beat my grey dog all to fits; indeed, at the time I considered him, without any exception, the very best dog I had ever seen; but after two or three hours his bolt was shot, he had run himself out, and dropped away to a canter; then it was the blue-grey came in, was pointing on all sides, and the crack nowhere. So much for a flash dog. *Yet this animal would have carried all before him at 'field trials.'*

I will mention another instance. Many years ago during the Alston Moor poaching time, I heard of a famous setter, the best of sixty, all tested and good dogs. I was anxious to behold this wonder, and went over, accompanied by 'Trimmer,' to try him, and with the intention of purchasing, if he came up to my expectations. When we commenced on the moor, this setter, a liver and white of the Edmond Castle breed (there are few better), set off like a racehorse—he was *the fastest dog I ever saw*—and would have the outside cast, which my blue-grey also wanted; the rivalry between them was curious to look at.

I saw directly where the liver and white had beaten the sixty others, viz., by being the swifter animal he got his point first

from having the outside cast (he was a roach, or wheeled-backed dog), and hunted low. Although he was faster than 'Trimmer,' yet this dog made up for his loss of speed by his lofty and superior carriage, and being equal in *width* of range, completely defeated this celebrated animal.

I purchased both these dogs for friends—the half-bred pointer, and liver and white setter. The former could never run two days in succession. The latter was a very enduring animal, but a very jealous one.

Many setters show great sagacity in their mode of hunting, never crossing the same cast, or ground twice; and always keeping their head 'to wind.' These dogs, though they may not be extraordinarily fleet, are, from their mode of hunting, very difficult to beat.

Other dogs, who are very fast, often show little or no sagacity, quartering the same ground repeatedly; they appear to be doing a deal of work, but in reality are only running over ground they have hunted before. I have ever remarked that the quick finders are inclined to be self-willed. And although you may wish them sometimes to hunt the same ground twice, will not do so. No man can teach a dog to find game so well as his own natural sagacity enables him to do, but you can occasionally help him a little.

I have often known men give five or six hundred, and much more, for a Scotch shooting, take down the best of guns, wines, and other requisites, regardless of expense, and come home disgusted and disappointed. And why? because their dogs were not able to stand hard work, and lacked endurance. Had these gentlemen taken precautions and procured good and lasting dogs, instead of being obliged to give up shooting and return utterly crestfallen, they would have come back contented and delighted with their dogs' performances.

It must be most annoying to anyone, after having gone to all the trouble and expense, to find he is helpless for want of dogs; and seeing a friend who has been wiser than himself, and has got lasting animals, bring home his forty or fifty brace a day.

If you want sport, no matter where you shoot, you must get dogs adapted to the ground you have. I have repeatedly seen a whole party of sportsmen at a standstill, and unable to go out, owing to all their dogs being knocked up. As I have said before, it is not the *number*, but the *quality* that is requisite. Six really good enduring dogs are quite sufficient for any man, let him go out every day; indeed, barring accidents, four are ample.

I will give an instance of the advantage of selecting good and lasting dogs. I was one of a party of four that on September 11th had bagged 3,066 head of grouse—one gentleman killed within seven head, to his own gun, as much as the whole party, solely by having superior dogs, and in addition, he lent a brace of dogs several times to his friends.

I was one of another party of four on a Scotch moor. In four days the four guns had killed 1,654 head. And one of them bagged 127 brace in one day, over one brace of setters. None of us ever used relays of dogs, or did any of us possess more than two brace each.

When I rented the Forse shootings, in Caithness, Mr. Thompson of Inglewoodbank, whom I have mentioned before, never had more than *two dogs, and used them daily*. He was a young man of five-and-twenty, an excellent walker and good shot, and his brace of dogs never knocked up. One of them was his jet black setter 'Paris,' that I called attention to as the breed of his uncle Harry Rothwell. I mention this to show it is not necessary to have such a large and costly quantity of dogs as many have.

Before closing and bidding you adieu, I hope and trust all will understand that I have not written this little volume with the idea of lauding up setters over pointers. Such has not been my intention.

I have seen both in England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, splendid specimens of the pointer, both good and tested dogs.

Those I most appreciated were a breed of self-liver-coloured ones, belonging to the Earl of Fife: these I saw in Mar Forest; they were long, low, light dogs, with the leather of their ears

remarkably thin, and coats as bright as satin, lively workers, and very enduring.

McNichol, the Duke of Buckingham's keeper, at Glenbucket, Aberdeenshire, was noted for a similar breed of self-liver-coloured ones; they were very good, and I frequently saw them, as I had for many years the adjacent moor, 'The Cabrach.' There was, and still is, a jet-black breed of pointers in the possession of the Duke of Buccleugh, of Dumlanrig Castle, Dumfriesshire. Alexander Robertson, Esq., of Foveran, Aberdeenshire, a well-known sportsman, also had a similar breed.

The Earl of Lonsdale's family have for more than half a century had a breed of black pointers at Lowther Castle, Cumberland, famous for their goodness and enduring qualities.

The late Mr. Edge's, Joseph Lang's, and Moor's, of Appelby, were all good. The first-named gentleman's breed was supposed to be the best in England.

Mr. Garth's 'Drake' is too well known to need any comment from me; also Messrs. Whitehouse and Lort's breeds, and many others whose names do not at this moment occur to me.

I have, now, I think, written all I know about setters, at least all that will be of any service to breeders. And if they have obtained any information, or derived any pleasure, in the perusal of these pages, I shall be more than amply repaid for any trouble I may have been at; and no one will feel more gratified and pleased than

EDWARD LAVERACK.

LONDON: PRINTED BY
SPOTTISWOODE AND CO., NEW-STREET SQUARE
AND PARLIAMENT STREET